

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully acknowledge receipt of the Office Action mailed June 29, 2004, the period for response to which being automatically extended an additional three months through December 29, 2004 with no required payment of extension fees, due to the omitted shortened statutory period for reply on page 2 of the Office Action.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 10, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Ichida et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,575,684); rejected claims 1, and 5-9 under §102(b) as being anticipated by *Hatagishi et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,700,162); and objected to claim 4. Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

By this amendment, Applicants amend claims 1-3, 5, and 8-11, cancel claim 4, and add new claim 12. Claims 1-3 and 5-12 are pending. Of these claims, claims 1, 11, and 12 are independent.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claim 4. Applicants have rewritten this claim, as new independent claim 12, to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and have cancelled claim 4. Accordingly, independent claim 12 is in condition for allowance.

I. 102(b) REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-3, 10, AND 11

Claims 1-3, 10, and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Ichida et al.* Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Applicants note that in order to properly anticipate Applicants' claimed invention under 35 U.S.C. §102, each and every element of the claim in issue must be found,

“either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.” “The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim.

Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co., 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).” See M.P.E.P. § 2131, 8th ed., 2001.

Amended claim 1 recites in part “a flexible locking arm having a first portion and a second portion supported by the wall and configured to lock with the terminal between the first and second portions, wherein the flexible arm extends obliquely from a top wall of the connector housing” (Spec. pp. 6-7 and Fig. 1A).

The Examiner asserts that *Ichida et al.* teaches “a flexible locking arm (14) having a first portion (18) supported and a second portion (16) supported by the wall and configured to lock with the terminal between the first and second portions” (Office Action at p. 2).

However, *Ichida et al.* teaches an elastic lock piece (14) with first and second portions which lie parallel to the top wall of the connector housing (10) (Fig. 1). Accordingly, *Ichida et al.* at least does not disclose the claimed “flexible arm which extends obliquely from a top wall of the connector housing,” as recited in amended claim 1. Thus, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is improper and should be withdrawn.

Moreover, claims 2, 3, and 10 are allowable at least due to their dependence from claim 1.

Amended claim 11 recites in part “a connector housing having chambers configured to insert and receive the terminals from the rears of the chambers, and wherein a single flexible locking arm is positioned to each of the chambers” (Figs. 5-7).

The Examiner asserts that *Ichida et al.* teaches “a connector comprising a connector housing (10) having chambers...wherein a single flexible locking arm is positioned to each of the chambers” (Office Action at pp. 2-3).

Ichida et al. teaches a connector housing (10) comprising a terminal insertion hole (12) configured to insert and receive a terminal (4) from the rear of the insertion hole (12), wherein an elastic lock piece (14) is positioned (col. 6, lines 11-25 and Fig. 1). Accordingly, *Ichida et al.* at least does not disclose the claimed “connector comprising chambers wherein a single flexible locking arm is positioned to each of the chambers,” as recited in amended claim 11. Thus, the rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is improper and should be withdrawn.

II. 102(b) REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1 AND 5-9

Claims 1 and 5-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Hatagishi et al.* Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Amended claim 1 recites in part “a flexible locking arm having a first portion and a second portion supported by the wall and configured to lock with the terminal between the first and second portions, wherein the flexible arm extends obliquely from a top wall of the connector housing” (Spec. pp. 6-7 and Fig. 1A).

The Examiner asserts that *Hatagishi et al.* teaches “a connector housing (60) including a chamber defined by a wall and configured to receive a terminal, and a

flexible locking arm (66-68) having a first portion (18) supported and a second portion (16) supported by the wall and configured to lock with the terminal between the first and second portions” (Office Action at p. 3).

Hatagishi et al. teaches a rear holder (66) which is integrally connected to the front and rear edges of the opening (65) through a front plastic band (67) and a rear plastic band (68) (col. 4, lines 19-35 and Fig. 1). The rear holder (66), along with plastic bands (67) and (68), are supported by the top wall (63a) of the connector housing (61) (Fig. 1), not the top wall of the chamber. Accordingly, *Hatagishi et al.* at least does not disclose the claimed “a connector housing including a chamber defined by a wall and configured to receive a terminal; and a flexible locking arm having a first portion and a second portion supported by the wall,” as recited in amended claim 1. Thus, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is improper and should be withdrawn.

Moreover, claims 5-9 are allowable at least due to their dependence from claim 1.

III. CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 11 and 12 are in condition for allowance. In addition, claims 2-10 are in condition for allowance at least due to their dependence from claim 1.

The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicants do not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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